

GREETINGS FROM THE OHWA BOARD

2015 is off to a brisk start and spring is just around the corner. The board members of the Orchard Heights Water Association want to reach out to our membership to apprise everyone of some changes that have occurred in the past year and also to remind everyone of the responsibilities of being a member of OHWA.

1) We said good-bye to Annette Joyce, former bookkeeper and office manager for OHWA for nearly 20 years, in November of 2014. She was the point person for the organization for many years and her service and understanding of the water system were greatly appreciated and will be sorely missed for a while yet.

2) With change, however, come new opportunities. The board interviewed applicants and hired fellow OHWA member, Victoire Felix, to take over the duties of bookkeeper and office manager. (Her name is pronounced "Victory." Please take a moment to read her attached Bio.)

3) Victoire has had to adapt to our computer programs while also learning a lot about the structure of our non-profit water cooperative in a short amount of time. Consequently, there have been a few glitches in terms of timing and billing that have occurred over the last couple of months. She is eager to learn and things are beginning to smooth out and get a little easier each month. Please continue to be patient with the learning curve and don't hesitate to contact Victoire directly with any concerns that arise.

Contact Victoire Felix: via E-mail at ohwassn@yahoo.com, or by phone at 503-871-1359.



NEW OFFICE MANAGER AT OHWA

I have lived in many places; South Dakota, Washington, California, and New Mexico-- but I've always loved the Willamette Valley. When I was around 11, and first came into the Valley, I asked "Is this the Will-a-mett?" My dad looked at me and said, "Babe, this is the Willamette, damn it, and don't you forget that." I never forgot

about the Willamette Valley, nor how to say it correctly.

And now I live here. My sister Paula and I bought a home on Orchard Heights Place and enjoy fixing up our home and working in our garden. We attended several garden shows this past year and recently joined the Willamette Heritage Center. We keep busy with creative writing projects, genealogy research, quilting and sewing.

I have enjoyed working as a credit manager at an Art Stamps business, and as a grant administrator and general ledger accountant for a low income housing non profit in New Mexico.

We look forward to being a part of this community. I will definitely enjoy working for and with you.

Sincerely,
Victoire Felix

REMINDERS

-  *Have your backflow device tests completed by July in order to meet the Sept. 30 deadline each year.*
-  *Update your contact information with Victoire via email: ohwassn@yahoo.com, or by phone: 503-391-9238.*
-  *Consider serving on the board and have a stake in the decisions that bring safe drinking water to your home.*

BACKGROUND OF OHWA

We are a non-profit, rural water cooperative that was started back in 1952 for the purpose of constructing, maintaining and operating a private water system to supply water for domestic, livestock, and garden purposes to the members of the association. Membership in the association is granted by sales of water shares and confers mutual responsibilities and benefits to the organization and its individual members. The OHWA adopted by-laws and created a Board of Directors to provide structure and oversight of the water system. There are 5 board members and the length of term for each is two years. Board members must be members of the association and serve in a volunteer capacity, without compensation. Election of officers occurs annually at the Annual Membership meeting in November. Your current Board of Directors is as follows:

Jennifer Meltzer, President
Teresa Hire, Vice President
Leo Woods, Treasurer
Clara Taylor, Secretary
Steve Riley, Member at Large

Most of the board members serve anywhere from two to eight years on the board, and so there is a continual need to find replacement volunteers from the membership. We will need to replace two board members in November of this year and really need members of the association to actively consider serving. Board meetings are generally held the third Tuesday of the month in the evening. Interested parties are encouraged to seek out additional information by contacting the office manager or a fellow board member.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF MEMBERSHIP

- 1) It is the responsibility of the water shareholder to make certain all membership fees, capitol improvement fees, and water usage billed monthly are paid on time. If the owner of the water share, rents out the property and the renter is billed directly, the OHWA must be notified within 30 days of a change in billing that occurs due to tenant vacancy or transfer of water share through actual sale of the property.
- 2) As long as a membership certificate is attached to a property, the ongoing membership fees and capitol improvement fees will continue to be assessed monthly, even if there is no active water usage during periods of vacancy. It is the responsibility of the shareholder to continue to pay these fees, in order to keep the share current and to remain a member of the water co-op.
- 3) Each property connected to the water system must undergo annual back-flow testing. The testing report must be submitted to OHWA before September 30th of the calendar year in which testing is performed.
- 4) We need to maintain current **emergency contact information** for all members of the association. This is especially important in case of disruption of water service. The most important contact information needed is a current primary name and phone number associated with each water share. It would also be helpful to have an e-mail address, if possible, to help in facilitating other types of communication. Rest assured that none of your contact information will be used or given out to third parties for any additional purpose. Please provide the most up-to-date information for our records: **by e-mail at ohwassn@yahoo.com, or leave info on the message line at 503-391-9238, or send in mail with your next payment.**
- 5) In order to remain solvent and continue to maintain and improve the water system, we must sell additional water shares. Because of loss of membership in recent years due to previous members being incorporated into the City of Salem, we have approximately 35 water shares available at a price of \$5000 each for the remainder of 2015. We can sell a water share to any interested party within the existing boundary map for OHWA and to a parcel of land that was in existence prior to 2011. Due to constraints with our emergency water supply agreement with the City of Salem, we cannot supply a water share to any newly divided lots created after 2011.

Please consider talking to your neighbors on wells or others who are considering building to inquire with OHWA about becoming a member of the association through purchase of a share.